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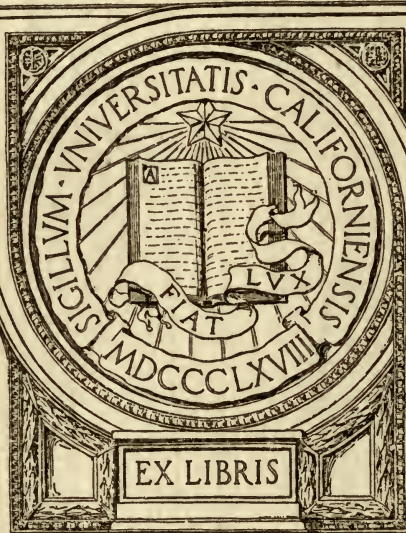
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THE FOOT OF THE RAINBOW

MYRTLE
GLENN
ROBERTS

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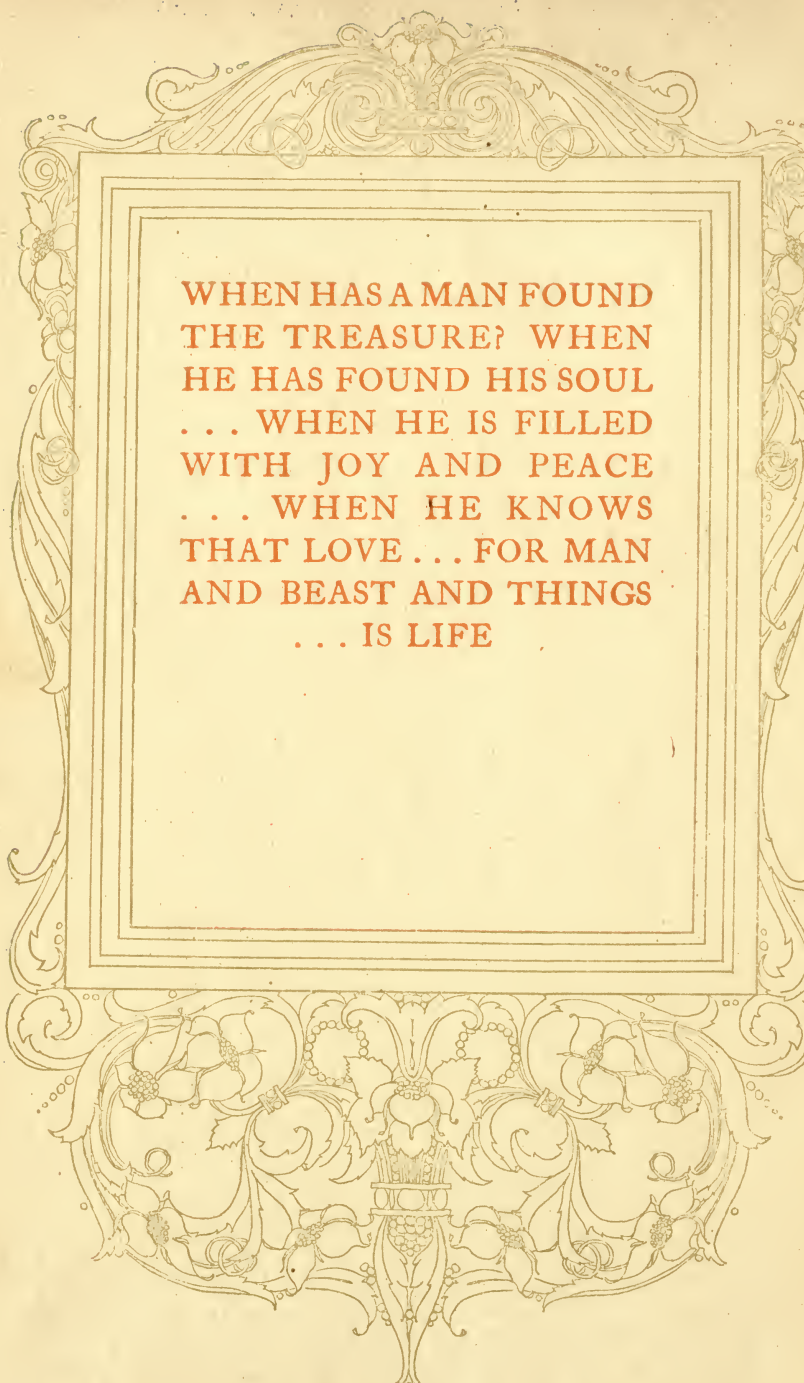
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THE FOOT OF THE RAINBOW



WHEN HAS A MAN FOUND
THE TREASURE? WHEN
HE HAS FOUND HIS SOUL
... WHEN HE IS FILLED
WITH JOY AND PEACE
... WHEN HE KNOWS
THAT LOVE ... FOR MAN
AND BEAST AND THINGS
... IS LIFE

THE FOOT OF THE RAINBOW

By MYRTLE GLENN ROBERTS



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DEDICATED MOST
LOVINGLY TO THOSE WHO
ARE SEEKING THE
TREASURE

THE FOOT OF THE RAINBOW

A PLAY IN THREE ACTS

CHARACTERS

THE WOMAN

THE MAN

THE SON

THE HERDSMAN

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ACT I

THE WOMAN • THE MAN
THE HERDSMAN



HE curtain rises on a portion of a small farm. To right, part of a corn-field is visible. The tall stalks are bent and broken and dripping as though swept by wind and rain. Adjoining the corn, a field of tall hay, lying almost flat, stretches to the back of the stage and into

the scenery. In the distance, back, and reaching across stage, is seen a chain of bare and desolate looking hills, one rising very much higher than the others. A meadow covers the front of the stage and rises gradually to a grassy knoll, back left, on which stands a tall, broad-limbed oak tree.

Water standing here and there on the uneven ground; the ruined fields, bits of broken lumber lying about, denote the devastating work of a recent storm.

Clouds hang heavy and dark, and distant thunder is heard. Soon the clouds break and roll away, the sky becomes clear, and bright sunlight floods the scene. Birds begin to twitter in the oak, and one is seen to fly across the meadow to the corn-field.

[A woman enters, left front, stops suddenly and looks long at the ruined fields. She is young and slight. She wears a plain neat

The Foot of the Rainbow

dress of soft blue material. It might once have been a Tyrian blue, but much wear and many washings have faded and dulled its richness. A short, sleeveless cloak of gray-green wool hangs loosely about her shoulders. Her hair, a reddish-brown, is wrapped in two heavy braids about her head. Her eyes, dark and large and luminous, appear to see more than other eyes. Pale and spiritual, she stands and looks and listens. Then stepping round the wet places, she makes her way to the top of the knoll.]

[A rainbow flashes across the scene, its colors dropping directly over the knoll and bathing the woman in an iridescent glory. She stands facing the audience unconscious of the light.] It shifts to a point beyond, arching across the scene, and showing at left of stage, back. The bird, disturbed in the corn-field twitters and flies back to the oak. There is a noise as of heavy steps on the corn-stalks, and a man steps out of the field.]

[He is young, fair, tall and broad shouldered; dressed in working clothes. His high laced boots are covered with the mud and wet of the fields. The woman turns quickly and speaks as he appears.]

THE WOMAN

Come up here and look at the rainbow.

The Foot of the Rainbow

THE MAN

I can see it from here.

THE WOMAN

O but it is more beautiful from here.
Everything is more beautiful from here.

[THE MAN *walks slowly across stage, through the puddles of water, picking up the pieces of broken boards and piling them aside.*]

THE MAN

Can anything be beautiful, after this?

THE WOMAN

It is not so bad as that.

THE MAN

No? Not bad? Look at the ruined fields! Could anything be worse?

THE WOMAN

Yes! far worse! We are here, you and I together.
Nothing has happened to us. We are together,
and all of life before us.

THE MAN

Yes, life on a miserable farm, with a ruined harvest.
That hay would have paid the mortgage at least;
now it will rot on the ground.

The Foot of the Rainbow

THE WOMAN

That will make the ground so much the richer for next year's crop.

THE MAN

What is next year to us, if we starve this winter. The whole country is a failure. We are so poor . . . and our neighbors are poorer than we.

THE WOMAN

[*Radiantly.*]

We are rich, rich, far richer than you know. What are ruined crops when you have heard God speak! Do not look at the ruins; come up here.

[*She reaches out to him. He walks slowly to the top of the knoll and takes her hand. She continues speaking.*]

Look! The bow of promise! See how beautifully it arches over this very farm.

THE MAN

[*With changed countenance.*]

Yes, and seems to drop into the field. It is beautiful. I wonder is it true that . . .

THE WOMAN

Everything that is good is true.

THE MAN

. . . that where the rainbow touches the earth, a golden treasure is buried, . . .

The Foot of the Rainbow

THE WOMAN

All the earth is filled with golden treasure.

THE MAN

. . . and the man who finds it becomes a Prince?

THE WOMAN

Yes, it is true. The man who finds it becomes a Prince.

THE MAN

A golden treasure! I have but to walk through that field and dig deep enough and I shall be a Prince and you a Princess.

THE WOMAN

If you dig deep enough and find the treasure, you will be a Prince, but that would not make me a Princess.

THE MAN

I would make you a Princess.

THE WOMAN

Then I would not be a true Princess. To be a true Princess I must strive for the treasure and win it for myself. It is the striving for a thing that wins the crown, not the possession of it.

THE MAN

See, it grows brighter and brighter! It is wonderful!

The Foot of the Rainbow

THE WOMAN

All the ruined field . . . is molten gold.

I must go.

THE MAN

[He starts toward the field as though dazed.]

THE WOMAN

You must go where?

THE MAN

To the foot of the Rainbow.

THE WOMAN

[Trying to stop him.]

There is no need to go. You are at the foot of the rainbow, here. Here we can strive together for the treasure. And we shall find it, you and I. There will be a crown for each of us . . . and royal robes. And honor for our son. Think of that, for our son! This morning after the storm I knew. . . . O it was as if God spoke to me. . . . Here in your own home is the foot of the rainbow.

[THE MAN during this speech walks down off the knoll facing the fields.]

THE MAN

This ruined place home? There is no light here. It is there . . . there . . . I must go.

The Foot of the Rainbow

THE WOMAN

Surely you can not mean it!

THE MAN

It is my only hope. At best there is barely a living here; the place is so small. Those hills are impossible and there is nothing but rock beyond even if we could afford to buy. Nothing but rock, hard granite, down to the sea. Out there is gold. Out there is the treasure.

[He has reached the edge of the field. Like one in a dream he turns, holds out his arms to her and continues speaking.]

I must go. Wait for me here. It is only a little way, and I will come back soon. Wait for me here. The golden treasure!

[He passes out of sight of the audience.]

THE WOMAN

Wait, wait! It is true about the treasure, but that is not the way. Wait, let me tell you.

[He passes on out of hearing. She watches him for a time, then speaks.]

He has almost reached it! O it is fading . . . it is . . . fading . . . it is gone! The rainbow is gone.

[The rainbow at back of stage fades and vanishes. She continues.]

Now he will come back! He is turning back. He is looking around him. O there it is brighter than

The Foot of the Rainbow

ever, over the hills . . . far . . . far . . . over the hills. He sees it! He is going to follow it!

[Stretching out her arm as though to stop him.]

O you must not go! You might find the treasure but it is such a hard way. You will have to lie . . . and steal . . . and kill . . . perhaps. You will be like all the others, . . . the millions of others. Blinded by greed and hate and jealousy. . . . How can you know the treasure if you should find it! Deadened with misery . . . how can you know . . . the night will come upon you and find you desolate . . . and day will break without a hope in the world. And you will never come back. Never, never, never!

[The last is a low moan and she sinks down upon the wet earth, her face in her hands.]

[THE HERDSMAN enters from left of stage, front, and stands quietly facing the knoll, back to the audience. He is medium tall and is neither young nor old. He is a little weary. It may be from having helped to care for the herds, all through the storm of the night before. His short leather cloak, high boots and soft tan hat are wet with the rain and spattered with the mud of the roads.]

[THE WOMAN remains silent a moment, then rises quickly, and in a triumphant voice and with glorified countenance, she speaks.]

The Foot of the Rainbow

THE WOMAN

He will come back! My Prince will come back. I will wait for him here. Here under the oak I will meet my Prince, I, his Princess.

[THE HERDSMAN *removes his hat. After a short pause* THE WOMAN *looks at him. He speaks quietly but firmly, in a voice rich and full of nameless sweetness.*]

THE HERDSMAN

I wish to buy your field of hay.

THE WOMAN

It is not for sale.

THE HERDSMAN

I am sorry then, for my cattle are already in it.

THE WOMAN

[*Looking out over the field.*]

Yes, I see them. So many of them; there must be fifty or more.

THE HERDSMAN

There are many, many more. Your fences are all down and we could not keep them out. We have been long on our way and the cattle have had very little to eat for days. They are in there now and it will be impossible to get them out until they are satisfied. I must buy the hay.

The Foot of the Rainbow

THE WOMAN

The field is a ruin, worth nothing to us. Why should you buy it?

THE HERDSMAN

You see for yourself what it is worth to me. To find it was like a miracle. The cattle were starving. The other farmers, it seems, harvested very early and their crops were small. They have barely enough for themselves. None to sell, or at least not enough for my needs. Your hay is worth the harvested price to me.

[THE WOMAN *looks at him steadily, calmly, as he continues.*]

I noticed as I came, many missing shingles from the roof of your house. Your barn too, has suffered from the storm. My men will repair them both and put up your fences.

[*His speech is kind, but compelling and definite. He turns, walks slowly out, THE WOMAN watching him. Then she turns toward the field and speaks.*]

THE WOMAN

The promise! The golden treasure in the field. O my Prince, come back.

ACT II

THE SON · THE HERDSMAN
THE MAN

Thirty years later. The curtain rises on a large living room. High ceiling, carved and beamed. Polished black floor, sparsely covered with small Oriental rugs. High-backed chairs, massive tables, bookcases with leaded glass doors, footstools, and the woodwork of the room, all of heavily carved black walnut. Lamps and side lights, globed in white crystal, light the room.

(At back of stage, three French windows open into a pergola. It is a dark moonless night. The lights from within reflect beyond the pergola upon a sun-dial, and paths which lead through an immaculate formal garden.

[THE SON enters the garden, back of stage.

Walking slowly, he stops meditatively now and then, steps into the pergola, looks out upon the night once more and then enters the room. He is in his thirtieth year and resembles THE MAN in Act One, except that he is slighter and has more the look of a scholar. He is serious but not cast down. He takes a turn or two thoughtfully up and down the room, looks up suddenly, to see THE HERDSMAN standing in the open window.]

[*He wears a gray flannel shirt, high boots and soft tan hat, as in Act One, and carries his leather cloak. Time has not changed him.*

The Foot of the Rainbow

He is erect and alert, though wearing still the suggestion of weariness in his countenance, and the marks upon his clothes of having traveled far. He speaks quietly.]

THE HERDSMAN

What is it?

THE SON

Thinking.

THE HERDSMAN

Pleasant thoughts I hope. }

THE SON

[Resuming his walk.]

I was thinking of my father.

THE HERDSMAN

[Entering the room.]

Loving thoughts then.

THE SON

[Bitterly.]

I shall have something to say to him, when the opportunity presents itself.

THE HERDSMAN

The opportunity?

THE SON

I mean if he ever comes here.

The Foot of the Rainbow

THE HERDSMAN

You mean . . . when he comes . . . home.

THE SON

[*Uneasily.*]

Well . . . yes.

THE HERDSMAN

[*Very slowly.*]

When the prodigal son returned, his father met him with a glad heart. The son may do as much for the father?

[*A short silence, THE SON does not answer.*]

THE HERDSMAN

The son may do as much for the father?

THE SON

[*Coldly.*]

He may, but he will not.

[*He pauses and then in justification of his attitude, he continues.*]

THE SON

He shirked every responsibility. He left us to get on as we might; to live or die; it was all one to him.

THE HERDSMAN

[*Affectionately.*]

Have you wanted for anything? Not merely the bare necessities, but all the luxuries this world has to offer have been yours. You have been guarded and guided most lovingly, while he has been a

The Foot of the Rainbow

wanderer. A wanderer; seeking, always seeking and never finding. Suffering want both in body and soul.

THE SON

He brought it upon himself.

THE HERDSMAN

The penalty is the same, and be sure that he has paid it is still paying it.

[THE SON *is puzzled. Walks to left of stage, speaks.*]

THE SON

Do you believe in my father; in his treasure hunting, I mean?

THE HERDSMAN

I believe that he was honest in his desire, but his darkened sense saw only the illusion.

[*Pause. Turning from THE SON and as though speaking to himself.*]

The lure of the world is irresistible. It is a dream that every man passes through, and he pays for the experience with a thousand deaths. It takes courage upon courage, to battle with the world, with the world's weapons.

[*He pauses, then turning to THE SON, continues.*]

The Foot of the Rainbow

If your father gives you the privilege of receiving him, it will be one more added to your already many blessings.

THE SON

[*Still aggressive.*]

After all these years. . . .

THE HERDSMAN

[*Quickly.*]

What are a few years in all eternity! Your mother held him always the true man, the good man, her Prince. He must rise to that thought some day. When he comes you will have the royal garments ready, and the feast prepared to receive him as she would wish him to be received.

THE SON

[*Struggling with his desire to resent and the knowledge of the truth of THE HERDSMAN's words.*]

She pined away for want of him. He made her suffer.

THE HERDSMAN

Then the more need for your compassion. That he made her suffer is the greatest of all his sorrows.

[*A step on the gravel path attracts both. THE MAN steps into the pergola. THE SON's look and manner change. He is at once the host meeting a stranger where strangers are always welcome.*]

The Foot of the Rainbow

THE MAN

May I come in?

THE SON

Indeed yes. All are welcome here, strangers and friends alike.

[THE MAN *enters slowly, walking with difficulty. He is well dressed and looks prosperous, but is stooped and white haired. All his sixty years weighing heavily upon him.* THE HERDSMAN *moves to right, and stands quietly during the following.*]

THE SON

[*Assisting THE MAN, and taking his hat and stick.*]

You look tired, very tired. Sit here; this is a comfortable chair. Now lean back and rest.

THE MAN

[*Wearily.*]

I walked from the village. I am tired. My feet are tired, my head is tired and . . . my heart is tired.

THE SON

It is a long walk from the village, especially on a sultry day, such as this has been. Was there no way to ride?

THE MAN

Yes, but the village is so extraordinary that I wanted to see it. . . .

The Foot of the Rainbow

[He pauses an instant, then touched by the spirit of peace and love enfolding the scenes which he has just passed through, and as if speaking to himself, he continues.]

. . . Every house built of common gray stone. The streets paved with it, . . . low walls of it, ivy-covered, . . . rose-covered. Flowers and tender growing things, all lovingly clinging to that hard . . . cold . . . gray . . . stone. Rude fountains built of it, with gray and green moss holding fast to it. "As hard as a stone," they say; but there must be something tender about stone when green things cling to it.

THE SON

[Pleased with this appreciation.]

It is its strength they love.

THE MAN

I have been everywhere in this world that a human being could go, and I have seen many strange and beautiful sights, but nothing more beautiful than the village. Then the fields beyond were wonderful, and the forest; and all the way I noted the care that is given every thing. Even the smallest flower by the roadside seemed to have just been looked after. I walked on and on, forgetting that I am no longer young, until it grew dark about me. Then I saw the illumination! Your lights above me . . . and I wanted to reach the

The Foot of the Rainbow

light. So I climbed the hill. . . . I rested on the way . . . but I am tired.

[*He appears overcome. THE SON, during the last few words of the speech, has poured a glass of wine, and handing it to him, speaks compassionately.*]

THE SON

Will you drink this? It may take the weariness away.

THE MAN

Yes. Thank you.

THE SON

Perhaps you are hungry. I'll get you something. . . .

THE MAN

No, no, I could not eat. . . . You are kind, and I am only a stranger to you.

[*He leans back and closes his eyes.*]

THE SON

I do not need to know you to be kind, besides I do know you.

THE MAN

You do know me? [*Sitting up quickly.*]

THE SON

Yes. You said your feet and head and heart were tired. . . . What more than that do I need to know?

The Foot of the Rainbow

THE MAN

[Resting quietly again.]

You do not live here alone?

THE SON

Until yesterday my mother was with me. Today
... I am alone.

THE MAN

Only yesterday! Tell me about your mother.

[THE HERDSMAN turns quickly and looks intently at THE SON.]

THE SON

My mother left me yesterday.

[He speaks in a final tone, as though not wishing to talk about his mother. Then meeting the glance of THE HERDSMAN, his face lights up, and with sudden inspiration and quiet tenderness, he continues.]

THE SON

My mother planned the village which you think so beautiful, and every man who lives there has come from the penitentiary.

THE MAN

[Interested.]

That is strange. I saw several of them, talked with them, and they seemed very kind.

The Foot of the Rainbow

THE SON

They are kind, and strong, and happy. Flowers grow for them like miracles. They lift the stone from the quarries, or talk with the birds . . . with equal ease.

THE MAN

You employ them here . . . on your estate?

THE SON

Yes, my mother employs only men who have come from the penitentiary. She bought several acres of granite ground in order to employ more of them. Each year she has enlarged the property, that none may be turned away who ask for help.

THE MAN

What is the object?

THE SON

To give them work and a home. To teach them through kindness, that they may begin all over again, and that a crime is not always the fault of the man who commits it. To help them to know that . . . all things are forgiven him who wishes it.

THE MAN

And did she succeed in teaching them to want forgiveness?

The Foot of the Rainbow

THE SON

What do you think? You saw and talked with some of them. You saw the village, the forest, the cultivated hills and this mountain of exquisite gardening. They have done it all. Does it look like the product of criminal minds?

THE MAN

[Illumined.]

And this house?

THE SON

Yes, and this house. They designed and made all the furniture. They designed and carved all the woodwork. Not in this room alone but throughout the house.

THE MAN

It is beautiful.

THE SON

My mother did not plan this house. She loved her cottage near the Prince's Knoll, opposite the Golden Field. She would have liked to live there always, but gratitude lifted her up here. "It must be done," they said. "Her home must be upon the highest point, that they might have it before them at all times." So they toiled to honor her. But it was not hard; the stones seemed to set themselves. When love works . . . there is no labor.

[The night has grown very black. There is occasional lightning and distant thunder.]

The Foot of the Rainbow

THE MAN

The Knoll. The Prince's Knoll; where is that?

THE SON

[Having occupied the front of the stage, he moves to back, looks out, noting the approaching storm.]

Below the hills. You can not see it from here. It is on the opposite side.

[A bright flash of lightning and a heavy peal of thunder. Almost instantly the rain comes down in torrents. Mingled with prolonged gusts of wind, and rumblings with occasional peals of thunder, it lasts during the remainder of the Act.]

[Seeming not to hear the storm, THE MAN has risen. Supporting himself by the arm of the chair, he stands looking out over the audience.]

THE MAN

Why do you call it the Prince's Knoll?

[THE SON, after closing and fastening the windows, deliberates a moment, arranges a chair, sits and then after glancing at THE HERDSMAN, who is watching him steadily, he speaks.]

The Foot of the Rainbow

THE SON

Because, for thirty years my mother waited there for her Prince. "He may come today," she would say, "and we must be ready to meet him." Every piece of work was planned to be finished as perfectly and as quickly as possible, because the Prince must not find anything unfinished nor poorly done. . . . It is a wonderful thing to live each day expecting a great event; you live your very best with every breath. . . . When I was a little chap, I would expect to see him coming like the Knight in the fairy tales on a great, white steed, clad in glittering mail, with banners flying and trumpets sounding. Then when I grew older and learned that the Prince was my father, I waited for him even more eagerly.

[*After a short silence, THE MAN speaks hopelessly.*]

THE MAN

Then he wasn't a real Prince. It was only your mother's fancy to call him so.

THE SON

Mother used to say: . . . "A Prince is a man who has found the treasure." My father went to find the treasure. "He would be a Prince," she said, "when he came back."

THE MAN

How does a man know when he has found the treasure?

The Foot of the Rainbow

THE HERDSMAN

[Very quietly, as though speaking his own experience.]

When he has found his soul. . . . When he is filled with . . . joy and peace. . . . When he knows that love . . . for man and beast and things . . . is life.

THE SON

[As though THE HERDSMAN had not spoken.]

The Prince never came. I lost heart and gave him up long ago, but mother never doubted. I have watched her in the early morning, day after day, going down the hill to the Knoll, and I knew she went to watch for her Prince. In the evening it was the same; sunset always found her there. She was wonderful too! She never grew old. I was like her older brother. I have seen her standing on the Prince's Knoll, under the oak, looking out over the Golden Field, the sun shining on her glorious hair, her slender body like a child's, and her attitude so confident and sure, that . . . even I . . . felt that he must come.

[He has risen and stands his full height, looking out over the audience. After a short pause, he continues.]

Only a few days ago she said: . . . "Son, he is coming very soon now; I must spend more time on the Knoll."

[He pauses, and then very softly.]

The Foot of the Rainbow

And she is waiting there now, under the oak. . . .

[THE MAN *has lost all his weariness and fatigue. He no longer stoops, but stands straight and tall and splendid.*]

[THE HERDSMAN *faces the audience, eyes intense and face alight with love and glorified fulfilment. There is a long silence, pregnant with joy, during which the steadily pouring rain, the low-voiced wind, and the soft rumbles of thunder are vaguely audible.*

THE HERDSMAN *quietly resumes his original position. THE SON and THE MAN look into each other's eyes for an instant.*]

THE MAN

. . . And what do you think of your father?

THE SON

What I think of him is of no consequence; he is her Prince.

THE MAN

[*Offering his hand.*]

Thank you for your confidence. I am rested now; good-bye.

THE SON

You are not going out into this storm?

THE MAN

[*Taking his hat and stick and moving toward one of the windows.*]

The Foot of the Rainbow

Yes, I am going out into the storm, now.

THE SON

[Following him, THE SON reaches the window first and bars the way.]

There is no place to go this side of the village.

[THE HERDSMAN turns quickly and lifts his hand. THE SON seeing him, reluctantly steps aside, leaving the way clear.]

THE SON

But wait, at least you must have a coat.

[THE HERDSMAN unfolds his cloak, holding it in both hands. THE SON takes it and folds it lovingly about THE MAN as he steps out into the storm. THE HERDSMAN has faced the audience again. THE SON closes the window and stands also facing the audience.]

THE SON

[Troubled.]

I didn't ask him what he came here for, who he was, nor where he was going.

THE HERDSMAN

There is no need; you will know.

ACT III

THE MAN · THE HERDSMAN
THE WOMAN · THE SON

It is early morning of the next day. The stage is dark. High up in the distance, right, glimmering through the blinding rain, are seen the lights from the house on the hill. There appear to be hundreds of them, and as the audience watches the scene, the outline of the building becomes visible. Gradually the other hills are formed, and the audience becomes conscious of the same scene as in Act One. After a moment or two the scene grows very still; the lights from the hill-top shining brilliantly as the rain decreases.

A gray light lifts the blackness, and day is dawning. On the Knoll, leaning against the oak, THE MAN stands at the head of a low mound, which is covered with a pall of roses.

The dawn slowly breaks into broad day, disclosing the once barren hills, now covered with vineyards, luxuriant and fruitful. The high hill is a marvel of landscape work, with its winding roads and foot-paths, borders of box and holly-hedges.

[THE MAN moves to the center and back of the mound, facing the audience. He wears THE HERDSMAN'S cloak and carries his hat and stick. He is serene and still, but pale, showing the effects of a great mental struggle.]

[THE HERDSMAN enters from the corn-field, walks to back of stage, near the Knoll.

The Foot of the Rainbow

Chimes break soft and pure into the limpid morning air, and tell in a strain of melody, a quarter to the hour, during which THE MAN and THE HERDSMAN look at one another in a long, earnest silence.]

THE MAN [Thoughtfully.]

When he is filled with joy and peace. . . . Found his soul. . . . Love for everybody, . . . everything. All day yesterday those words were ringing in my ears; but not until night, did I recognize them, and then. . . .

THE HERDSMAN

And then . . . you were rested.

THE MAN

For the first time in thirty years.

THE HERDSMAN

I saw the weary load fall from you. The pain and sorrow which the world had put upon you, had no more power to make you suffer.

THE MAN

I was free, . . . free. . . . My limbs, stiff and drawn with pain, suddenly were lithe and straight again. . . . The dull ache left my head and heart, and my whole being seemed to rise on angels' wings . . . and burn and glow with . . .

The Foot of the Rainbow

THE HERDSMAN

With love!

THE MAN [Uninterrupted.]

Burn and glow with love. All my struggles were a dream that vanished . . . as though they had never been . . . and I was filled with . . .

THE HERDSMAN

With joy and peace.

THE MAN

[*Still as though THE HERDSMAN had not spoken.*]

Filled with joy and peace. And out here through the night, and the storm, . . . I have found . . .

THE HERDSMAN

Your soul.

THE MAN

I have found, . . . I do not know. It is not clear. This absolute and all-satisfying peace which possesses me; is it death? I came back to die.

THE HERDSMAN

It is life. There is no death.

THE MAN

No death! And how I have longed for it.

The Foot of the Rainbow

THE HERDSMAN

Do you wish you had found, what you thought to be death?

THE MAN

No, I would pass through the whole miserable experience again, for one hour of this. But must I pay for it? Will this vanish too, like all beautiful dreams, leaving me more wretched than ever?

THE HERDSMAN

Your dreams passed away because you ceased to want them. They no longer satisfied.

THE MAN

Yes, . . . after a time they wearied me. I sought in vain . . . for something true.

THE HERDSMAN

You sought in vain. . . . Where? Where did you seek?

THE MAN

Among the men . . . and women . . . of all lands.

THE HERDSMAN

And you found?

THE MAN

Deceit. . . . Cupidity. . . . Trickery. . . . Fraud, all fraud.

The Foot of the Rainbow

THE HERDSMAN

[*Quickly.*]

You found what you gave.

THE MAN

I but protected myself.

THE HERDSMAN

This farm . . . brought forth only barrenness and desolation for you . . . because . . . you hated it. . . .

[*Softly and with deep meaning.*]

. . . She, has loved it into a paradise.

THE MAN

What has that to do with men and women?

THE HERDSMAN

Everything. You met the world as you met your home, and the result . . . was the same; . . . barrenness and desolation.

THE MAN

[*Thoughtfully.*]

I worked as other men worked.

THE HERDSMAN

Yes, as other men worked. I heard you lie . . . and betray confidence . . . for gain. I saw you steal . . . for the mere pleasure of out-doing another. I saw you kill. . . .

The Foot of the Rainbow

[THE MAN *makes a gesture of protest. Softened and repentant, he speaks.*]

THE MAN

I was hard. . . . Yes, I was hard . . . and cruel sometimes. I am sorry for that. . . .

[*Pause.*]

. . . But I was considered a worthy citizen. I was known for my integrity, my honesty. I was praised for my business ability, and honored for my possessions.

THE HERDSMAN

Yes, and with all that, what have you brought here?

THE MAN

Empty hands. God help me.

THE HERDSMAN

In your world . . . it was every man for himself. That is why all things wearied you. That is why you grew old and feeble and longed for death. The life-giving energy does not work so.

[*He pauses, and then with great tenderness.*]

O man, joy taken from another can not live. It dies when it leaves the victim, and hangs a dead weight upon your soul. It is only when we give, that we really live. It is only when a man forgets himself . . . that God possesses him.

The Foot of the Rainbow

THE MAN

[*Broken.*]

Why have I come here?

THE HERDSMAN

[*Radiant with understanding.*]

To find the treasure.

THE MAN

Long ago, I despaired of finding the treasure.

THE HERDSMAN

It is more constant than you. It has not despaired of you.

[*Dropping to a softer tone.*]

When you gave up, . . . when you stopped struggling and fighting, . . . see how it led you home. Home to beauty, love, life.

THE MAN

Love has been a meaningless word to me, these many years.

THE HERDSMAN

Love is a man's salvation, . . . and it is always waiting for him. . . . In every man's life there is a human love which uplifts, and finds in him its answering note, regardless of opposition. He may avoid it all his earthly days, but he can not wholly escape it. It is a love that never sees, knows nor takes account of wrong he may have done. It

The Foot of the Rainbow

believes in him always. Sometimes that salvation is a friend; one man's love for another. More often it is a woman; . . . usually a man's mother. The other love . . . is a passion which must be fed, and which dies with neglect. But even that love has been known to be pure enough to endure. Once in a thousand years one may be found loyal and strong enough to prove it. Here is such a love! Look about you. All this because of love. First for you alone. Then it grew until it knew no bounds; . . . limitless it rested upon all, . . . bringing peace to heavy hearts and to crime laden souls. It penetrated into the depths of the earth and reared that palace on the hill. For all who pass this way, it has filled the world with loveliness. It was love pouring into your consciousness all day yesterday, that gave you freedom and rest, last night.

[During this speech, THE MAN'S countenance changes from woe to wistfulness; from a vague realization to a glorious understanding.]

THE MAN

Why should love do this for me? What have I done for love?

THE HERDSMAN

Ah, . . . that is love's secret. It blesses always and asks nothing in return. Let us not question why it is so.

The Foot of the Rainbow

THE MAN

But what of those whom I have wronged? What of those who suffer because of me?

THE HERDSMAN

I said, . . . in every man's life, there is a love that brings him peace. . . . In every man's.

THE MAN

Yes, . . . but the women, . . . the one woman.

THE HERDSMAN [*Thoughtfully.*]

The one woman. . . . Yes, . . . you shall make full reparation to her.

THE MAN

O then would my joy be full! But that is not possible; I have come too late.

THE HERDSMAN

Too late? It is never too late.

THE MAN

But she is gone.

THE HERDSMAN

Gone where? Everybody and everything, that ever has been, is here now. Life is, and death is not.

THE MAN

Then why do I not see her, if she is here?

The Foot of the Rainbow

THE HERDSMAN

Do you remember when you went away, how she tried to tell you? . . .

THE MAN

[With quick inspiration.]

That I need not go. That I would find the treasure here.

THE HERDSMAN

And you would not hear her.

THE MAN

I could not hear. I did not know.

THE HERDSMAN

You can not see her now for the same reason. You do not know. It is the understanding which separates, . . . which unites.

THE MAN

When I reach her understanding, . . . I shall behold her.

THE HERDSMAN

Yes. It will be as though you had never parted.

[The scene has been growing pinker, rosier, brighter, until now the house on the hill glints and gleams in the sunlight like a diamond palace. Glimpses of brilliant colored flowers are seen beyond the hedges, shining

The Foot of the Rainbow

and newly washed. The vineyards show the white and purple grapes. The yellow hay field, tall and waving, shimmers in the sun. The corn is seen full in the ear, and every growing thing seems to respond to the light.]

THE MAN [*With glad hope.*]

She is here! I could not hear her then . . . and yet she told me all that I would do. Her words come to me now, . . . but I could not . . . hear . . . them . . . then. I can not see her now, but . . . she . . . is here. No death! Yes, yes, I believe and I will listen. I want to hear. . . . I want to hear.

[*A rainbow appears over the high hill, a broad ribbon of prismatic colors, that fall full upon the Knoll, ending in the pall of roses. From the descending end of the bow, the ribbon widens, the colors merging into a pale shining atmosphere, enveloping THE MAN and changing him into a being of ethereal beauty. Beholding the rainbow, he raises his face to the light and flings wide his arms. The cloak falling back off his shoulders, shows him clad in glittering mail. His stick has become a sword, which drops at his side; his hat a helmet, remaining in his hand.*]

THE MAN

The Foot of the Rainbow! Here . . . with you!

Yes, you tried to tell me, but with the sound of

The Foot of the Rainbow

gold, gold in my ears, gold before my eyes, the glamour of the world's favor; because of my gold, . . . I was too dull and gross to hear. But now I hear, now I know. You are telling me that where I find myself, there is my treasure. You are telling me that love must rule the world, and all who fight against it are but beating and bruising their wings. You are telling me that we must love, love, love, . . . every human being. We must love everything that lives and breathes in this world and out of it, every atom beneath our feet and in the sky above. Had I loved this barren ground as you have, it would have flowered and blossomed for me as it has for you, . . . for them. But now I hear. Now I see and I know.

[Folding his arms over his breast.]

Love is the treasure. It is here . . . in myself.

[Out of the effulgent mist, slowly appears the form of THE WOMAN, clad in brilliant white. A garment which seems not to end, but floating away from her, becomes a part of the mist. Each rose in the pink carpet upon which they stand, becomes distinct in the dancing light. THE MAN falls to his knees and bows before THE WOMAN in adoration. She carries a glowing crown of stars, which she places upon his head. The chimes joyously peal forth the hour, out of which harmony the voice of THE WOMAN is heard.]

The Foot of the Rainbow

THE WOMAN'S VOICE

Behold, I give it you. The crown which was yours before the world began. Entrusted to my care I have kept it pure and bright, for that wondrous day when you should call for it. My Prince, I crown you. My Prince of Love and Truth. One more nobleman in the court of heaven, pledged to serve his King.

[With the last note from the chimes, THE WOMAN and the crown slowly fade from sight. THE MAN rises, reaching into the mist toward the vanishing form.]

THE MAN

With you through eternity. No death, . . . but life. No pain, only joy forever and ever. And peace, peace, unspeakable peace. I could not hear you then, but I hear you now. The treasure is love. I have found it.

THE HERDSMAN

You are wonderful!

THE MAN

And I am not to meet you, ashamed and old and wrinkled, misshapen and full of pain, but as a Prince, with all the ardour of youth. With a great joy, loving you, not as a clod of earth, but as the angels in heaven love.

The Foot of the Rainbow

[*The rainbow vanishes, leaving the scene brilliant with sunshine, and still, but for the clear singing of birds in the distance. With the cloak again enfolding him, THE MAN falls across the bed of roses, face down, among the petals in which there are no thorns. THE SON comes out of the house, makes his way down the winding paths, passes along the foot of the hills and off stage at left, back of the Knoll.*]

THE HERDSMAN

“ . . . for as a Prince hast thou power with God and with men and hast prevailed.” *Gen. 32-28.*

[*THE SON enters front of stage, left. Notes THE HERDSMAN, his shining countenance, looks toward the Knoll, then walks to the top of it. He bends over THE MAN and tries to move him, then rises and speaks with awe and dawning light.*]

THE SON

The man who came last night! But I thought he was old. His hair was white. This man is young and his hair is fair.

THE HERDSMAN

Your story melted away the years. He is her Prince.

[*There is a short silence. THE SON removes his hat, stands erect and speaks into the distance.*]

The Foot of the Rainbow

THE SON

My father! I am glad I was kind. Did I have the feast prepared? Did I clothe him in the royal garments? I think I gave him what he most desired. I am glad. Her Prince! They have met.

[*To the Herdsman.*]

And the glory of it all, is yours.

THE HERDSMAN

[*Quietly.*]

The glory is not mine, but His that sent me.

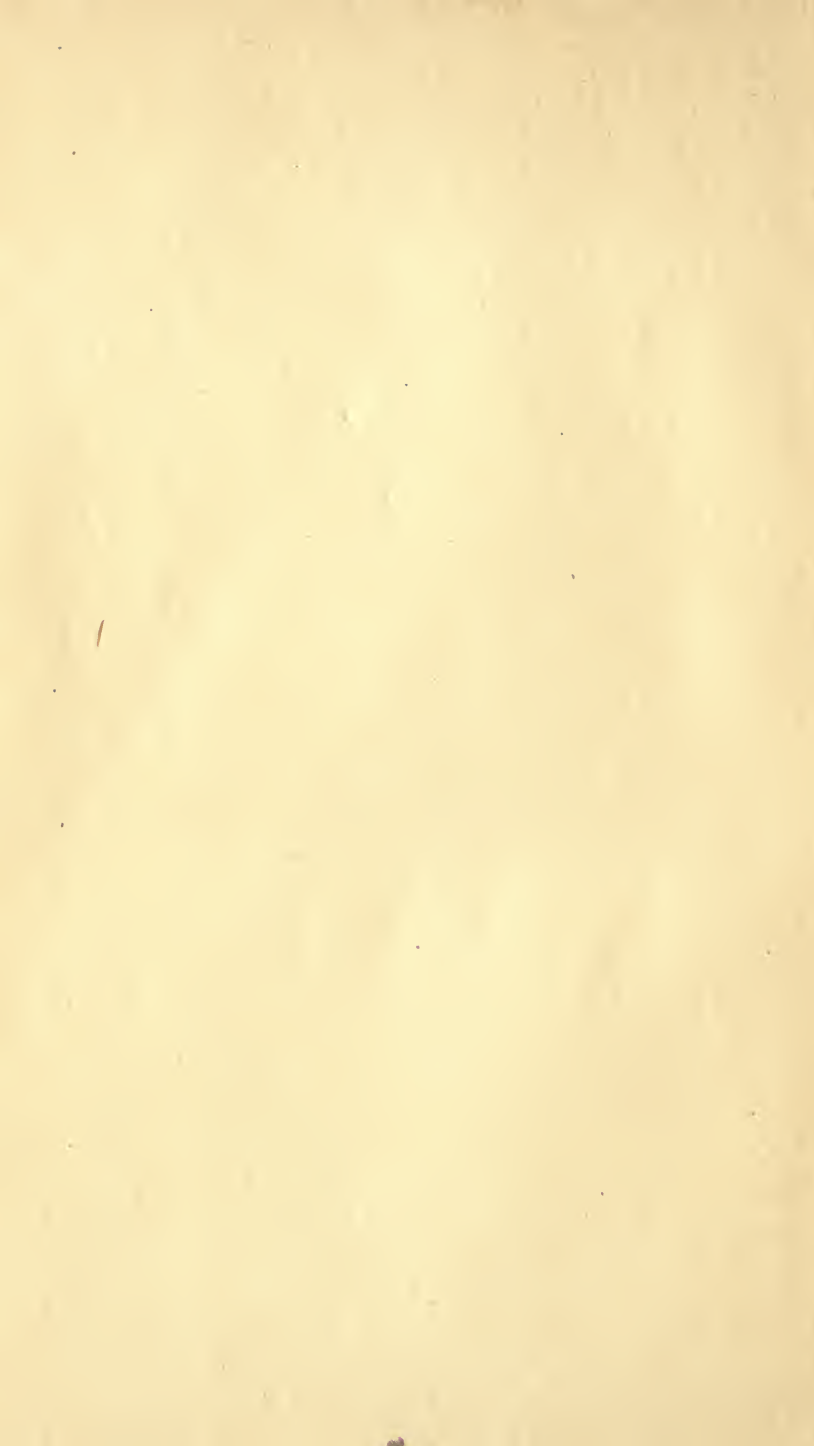
[*There is a moment's pause, when the scene is suddenly peopled with the beginning of the day's activity. Men and women with baskets appear in the grape-arbors. Gardeners are seen among the hedges, along the roads and among the flowers. The shouts of children and their merry laughter come from somewhere out of the sunshine and gladness. The ringing of the steel on the stone in the quarries, is distinct and tuneful; and over all a meadow lark sends out a long, alluring note to his mate, which is answered as the curtain slowly falls.*]

CURTAIN



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